

Guide to Authors*npj Systems Biology and Applications*

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AIMS AND SCOPE

Aims and Scope

npj Systems Biology and Applications is an online Open Access journal dedicated to publishing the premier research that takes a systems-oriented approach. The journal aims to provide a forum for the presentation of articles that help define this nascent field, as well as those that apply the advances to wider fields. We encourage studies that integrate, or aid the integration of, data, analyses and insight from molecules to organisms and broader systems. Important areas of interest include not only fundamental biological systems and drug discovery, but also applications to health, medical practice and implementation, big data, biotechnology, food science, human behaviour, broader biological systems and industrial applications of systems biology. We encourage all approaches, including network biology, application of control theory to biological systems, computational modelling and analysis, comprehensive and/or high-content measurements, theoretical, analytical and computational studies of system-level properties of biological systems and computational/software/data platforms enabling such studies.

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- Results
- Discussion
- Methods
- Acknowledgements
- Competing Interests
- Contributions

- Funding
- References
- Figure legends
- Tables
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Sample References

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Belkaid Y, & Rouse BT. Natural regulatory T cells in infectious disease. *Nat Immunol* **6**: 353–360 (2005)

Journal article, more than five authors

Miller W et al. Cytomegalovirus infection after bone marrow transplantation: an association with acute graft-v-host disease. *Blood* **67**: 1162–1167 (1986)

Online journals (treat e-numbers like print page numbers; (OK to have a DOI in lieu of volume and page numbers)

Hill, W. G., Goddard, M. E. & Visscher, P. M. Data and theory point to mainly additive genetic variance for complex traits. *PLoS Genet.* **4**, e1000008 (2008).

Journal article, e-pub ahead of print

Bonin M et al. F-ara-A pharmacokinetics during reduced-intensity conditioning therapy with fludarabine and busulfan.

Bone Marrow Transplant 2007; e-pub ahead of print 8 January 2007; doi:10.1038/sj.bmt.1705565

Journal article, in the press:

Gallardo RL, Juneja HS, & Gardner FH. Normal human marrow stromal cells induce clonal growth of human malignant T-lymphoblasts. *Int J Cell Cloning* (in the press).

Letter

Caocci G, Pisu S. Overcoming scientific barriers and human prudence [letter]. *Bone Marrow Transplant.* **38**, 829–830 (1999).

Publicly available preprint

Babichev, S. A., Ries, J. & Lvovsky, A. I. Quantum scissors: teleportation of single-mode optical states by means of a nonlocal single photon. Preprint at <http://arXiv.org/quant-ph/0208066> (2002).

Book (publisher's location is optional. If used, include state in two-letter abbreviation or country for all cities except New York and London)

Diener, B. J. & Wilkinson, P. (eds) *Transplantation Techniques* (Harvard Univ. Press, 1989).

Meyer, H. A. *The Role of Abdominal Fat* 2nd edn, Vol. 2 (CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, 1970).

Chapter in book (if more than two editors, use first editor's name followed by et al.)

Harley, N. H. & Vivian, L. in *Mechanisms of Disease* 4th edn, Vol. 2 (eds Sodeman, W. A. & Smith, A.) Ch. 3 (Springer, Dordrecht, The Netherlands, 1974).

Published abstract (page number is optional)

Feig, S. A. et al. Bone marrow transplantation for neuroblastoma. *Exp. Hematol.* **13**, 123, abstr. 102 (1985).

Online references (add last-accessed date if available)

Manaster, J. Sloth squeak. Scientific American Blog Network. <http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/psi-vid/2014/04/09/sloth-squeak> (2014).

National Institutes of Health. Genome-wide association studies (GWAS). <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/gwas/index.htm>. Accessed 4 January 2007.

Meeting

Brentjens, R. et al. Marked regression of adenopathy following infusion of autologous T cells. 13th annual meeting of the American Society of Gene and Cell Therapy, Washington, DC, 17–22 May 2010.

Software

SAS v.8 (SAS Institute, 2000).

Patent

Pagedas, A. C. Reusable laparoscopic retrieval mechanism. US patent 6,387,102 (2002).

Kuznicki, S.M. & Thrush, A.K. Irrigation wells. European patent 0405978A1 (1990).

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- Reject, but indicate to the authors that further work might justify a resubmission.
- Reject outright, typically on grounds of specialist interest, lack of novelty, insufficient conceptual advance or major technical and/or interpretational problems.

Selecting Peer Reviewers

Reviewer selection is critical to the publication process, and the editors' choice is based on many factors, including expertise, reputation, and specific recommendations. A reviewer may decline the invitation to evaluate a manuscript where there is a perceived conflict of interest (financial or otherwise).

Appeals

Even in cases where editors did not invite resubmission, some authors ask the editors to reconsider a rejection decision. These are considered appeals, which, by policy, must take second place to the normal workload. In practice, this means that decisions on appeals often take several weeks. Only one appeal is permitted for each manuscript, and appeals can only take place after peer review.

Decisions are reversed on appeal only if the editors are convinced that the original decision was a serious mistake, not merely a borderline call that could have gone either way. Further consideration may be merited if a referee made substantial errors of fact or showed evidence of bias, but only if a reversal of that referee's opinion would have changed the original decision. Similarly, disputes on factual issues need not be resolved unless they were critical to the outcome. Thus, after careful consideration of the authors' points, most appeals are rejected by the editors.

If an appeal merits further consideration, the editors may send the authors' response or the revised paper to one or more referees, or they may ask one referee to comment on the concerns raised by another referee. On occasion,

particularly if the editors feel that additional technical expertise is needed to make a decision, they may obtain advice from an additional referee.

Correction and Retraction Process

Published content is final and cannot be amended. The online version is part of the published record hence the original version must be preserved and changes to the paper should be made as a formal correction. If an error is noticed in an article, a correction should accompany the article. An HTML (or full-text) version of the correction will also be created and linked to the original article.

Please note the following categories of corrections to peer reviewed content:

- Erratum. Notification of an important error made by the journal that affects the publication record or the scientific integrity of the paper, or the reputation of the authors, or of the journal.
- Corrigendum. Notification of an important error made by the author that affects the publication record or the scientific integrity of the paper, or the reputation of the authors or the journal.
- Retraction. Notification of invalid results. All co-authors must sign a retraction specifying the error and stating briefly how the conclusions are affected.

Decisions about corrections are made by the Editor (sometimes with peer-reviewers' advice) and this sometimes involves author consultation. Requests to make corrections that do not affect the paper in a significant way or impair the reader's understanding of the contribution (a spelling mistake or grammatical error, for example) are not considered.

In cases where co-authors disagree about a correction, the editors may take advice from independent peer reviewers and impose the appropriate correction, noting the dissenting author(s) in the text of the published version.

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